

Remarks

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Thus, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 2 and 3, and to further define the copper catalyst based on the disclosure from page 7, line 17 to page 6, line 7 of the specification. Additional changes have been made in claim 1 to place it in more conventional form according to U.S. practice, such changes being essentially self-explanatory.

As a result of the amendments to claim 1, claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled and claim 4 has been amended to depend only from claim 1.

The other claim amendments are, like claim 1, for the purpose of placing them in more conventional form according to U.S. practice.

In view of the amendments to claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 1-7 under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112 has been rendered moot.

Similarly, the rejection of claims 1-7 under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112 has been rendered moot.

The rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Matsubara et al. is respectfully traversed.

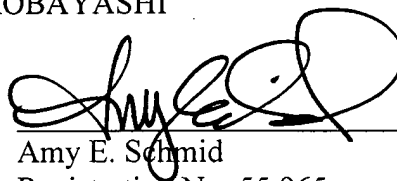
As noted by the Examiner under the Priority section on page 2 of the Office Action, and again at the top of page 7, this rejection can be overcome by obtaining the benefit of Applicant's Japanese priority date, January 23, 2004. For this purpose, Applicants are enclosing an English translation of the priority application, in view of which the rejection based on the Matsubara et al. reference should be withdrawn.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that each of the grounds of rejection set forth by the Examiner has been overcome, and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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